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As the conquest proceeded, the Arabs secured favourable terms because, holding the great cities, they were able to make a bargain with the invaders. Generally as at Palermo they secured liberty of worship and trade, but at Catania the town was given as a fief to the bishop, and the Moslems from the two kaids down were enrolled as villeins. Outside the walled towns, the Mohammedans sank generally into serfs, and "agarenus" which meant a Saracen, became synonymous with villein-status, But in the cities the Moslems retained their high spirit, and for two centuries, from Roger I. to Manfred, supplied the backbone of the army.

Under the two Williams, the safety of the Arabs was menaced from every side save that of the court. Falcandus is full of laments over the unprovoked attacks made on the Moslems in Palermo during the *Smeutes* against William I; disarmed by Maio, they were now massacred by the Christian mob; in other parts of the island, they were so persecuted that they migrated en masse to the south of the island, "and even now," says Falcandus, "they hate the Lombards so much that not only do they refuse to return to

those part of Sicily, but they will not
suffer people
of that race to come among them."

Yet the Arab influence remained as
strong at
court as under Roger, William I. and
William II.
were if anything more Moslem to
outward view
than Roger; both spoke Arabic; both
were sur-